

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 18, 21-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,075,610 to Ueda et al (“Ueda”).

Claims 5-17, 19, and 20 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 4 and 5 have been canceled.

Claims 1-3 and 6-23 remain pending.

Rejection of claims 1-4, 18, and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

With respect to independent claim 1, the Office Action states that Ueda discloses all of the steps of Applicants’ claimed invention.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to point out more clearly what Applicants regard as the invention. Support for the claim amendment can be found, at least, on page 12, lines 9-13 of the specification. Further, the subject matter of dependent claims 4 and 5 has been incorporated into independent claim 1.

The Examiner has stated that dependent claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, amended independent claim 1 is now patentably distinct over Ueda and allowable.

Independent claims 18 and 21-23 have been amended to recite similar features as claim 1, and therefore are patentably distinct over Ueda and allowable for at least the reasons discussed in connection with claim 1.

Claims 2-3, which depend directly from the independent claim 1, incorporate all of the

limitations of independent claim 1 and are therefore patentably distinct over Ueda and allowable for at least those reasons provided for claim 1.

Objection of claims 5-17, 19, and 20

The Office Action objects to claims 5-17, 19, and 20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The subject matter of claims 4 and 5 has been incorporated into independent claims 1, 18, and 21-23, and claims 4 and 5 have been canceled. Therefore, claims 1, 18, and 21-23 are now allowable.

Claims 6-17, 19, and 20, which depend directly, or indirectly, from the independent claims 1 and 18, incorporate all of the limitations of the independent claims and are therefore allowable for at least those reasons provided for claim 1 and 18.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration, withdrawal of all rejections, and allowance of all pending claims in due course.

Respectfully submitted,



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